

Application No. 10/018,978, filed 19 April 2002
Amendment and Response of 03 September 2003
Responsive to Office Action of 03 June 2003

Examiner: Deborah D. Carr
Group Art Unit: 1621

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in the instant application, claims 1-19, 21, 24-26, and 28-30 have been allowed, and claims 20, 22, 23, and 27 stand rejected. Amendment of claims 20, 23, 24, and 30 is requested, as well as cancellation without prejudice or disclaimer of claims 21 and 28. New claims 31-33 are presented for entry. Accordingly, upon entry of the Amendments presented herein, claims 1-20, 22-27, and 29-33 will be pending in the application.

Support for the Amendments to the claims may be found in the application as filed. No new matter has been added. For example, amended claim 20 incorporates subject matter of claim 21 as filed, and amended claim 24 incorporates subject matter of claim 20 as filed. Claims 23 and 27 have been amended for greater clarity. A typographical error in claim 30 has been corrected. New claims 31-33 find support in at least claims 21-23 as filed.

Rejected Claims – 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The claims thus amended are believed to be in condition for allowance. The outstanding Office Action rejects claims 20, 22, 23, and 27 as being anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) *Pryde, et al., JAOCA* 38, 375-79 (1961) and U.S. Patent No. 3,504,038. However, the Office Action also states that claims 1-19, 21, 24-26, and 28-30 are “allowable over the prior art.”

The amended claims presented herein are also allowable over the prior art. Claim 20 has been amended to incorporate dependent claim 21, which has been found allowable. Inasmuch as the scope of amended claim 20 is equivalent to claim 21 as filed, amended claim 20 is also allowable over the prior art. It follows that claims 22 and 23, which depend from claim 20, are likewise novel and unobvious over the prior art. Amended claim 24 incorporates the features of claim 20 and is also novel and inventive over the prior art; likewise new claims 31-33, which correspond to claim 24 as depending from each of claims 21-23. Indeed, Applicant submits that all claims submitted for reconsideration are therefore allowable.

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Conclusions

Amendment and cancellation of the claims herein, made without waiver or prejudice, should in no way be construed as acquiescence to any of the rejections/objections set forth in the instant Office Action, or in any previous Office Action, and were done solely to expedite prosecution. Applicants reserve the option to prosecute the same or similar claims as those originally filed in the instant application or one or more or subsequent applications.

In view of foregoing, entry of the Amendments and Remarks presented herein, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections and objections, and allowance of this application with all the claims as amended herein are respectfully solicited.

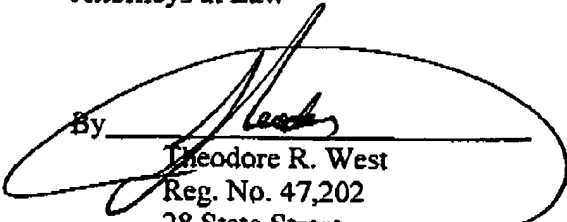
Please charge any fees that are necessary for entry of this Amendment and Response to our Deposit Account No. 12-0080. Applicant requests any extension of time, 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), that may be required to enter this Amendment and Response, or for any other purpose.

If the Examiner believes that conversation with Applicants' representative would be helpful in expediting prosecution of this application, Examiner is invited to call the attorney of record at (617) 227-7400.

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